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REASON FOR WITHDRAWAL National security restriction
TYPE OF MATERIAL Agenda
CREATOR'S NAME Brent Scowcroft
CREATOR'S TITLE National Security Adviser
RECEIVER'S TITLE President
TITLE NSC meeting on the NSSM 246 Report on
US Defense Policy and Military Posture
and the NSC study on Naval Force
Requirements
CREATION DATE 12/02/1976
VOLUME 7 pages
COLLECTION/SERIES/FOLDER ID . 031200040
COLLECTION TITLE National Security Adviser. National
Security Council Meetings File
DATE WITHDRAWN 03/31/1998
WITHDRAWING ARCHIVIST LET

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING
ON THE NSSM 246 REPORT ON
U.S. DEFENSE POLICY AND MILITARY POSTURE
AND THE NSC STUDY ON
NAVAL FORCE REQUIREMENTS

Thursday, December 2, 1976

The Cabinet Room

From: Brent Scowcroft

I. PURPOSE

To be briefed on and discuss NSC studies on U.S. Defense Policy and Military Posture (NSSM 246) and Naval Force Requirements.

II. BACKGROUND, PARTICIPANTS, AND PRESS ARRANGEMENTS

A. Background

1. NSSM 246. In September, you directed through NSSM 246 that the NSC conduct a broad review of U.S. defense policy and military posture. The study, which was conducted by the NSC Defense Review Panel, has been completed. It provides a range of illustrative strategies for both our strategic and general purpose forces, taking into account their military, arms control, and budgetary implications.

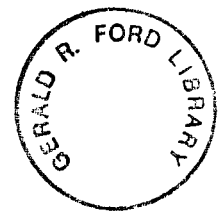
In the area of strategic forces, the study highlights the following issues as central to U.S. strategy:

- Deterrence Criteria: What criteria for selecting and sizing U.S. strategic offensive and defensive forces will assure achievement of our fundamental objective of deterring nuclear attack?
- Force Diversity: How much force diversity and redundancy is necessary to provide adequate confidence in performance, to hedge against unexpected technological breakthroughs or catastrophic failures, and to complicate any Soviet first strike designs? The study examines the triad of

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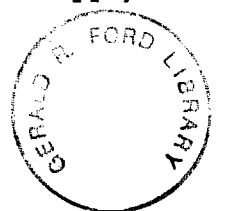


of bombers, ICBMs, and SLBMs and possible alternatives such as a dyad of bombers and SLBMs only. Force modernization programs such as the [REDACTED] are related to this analysis.

- Countersilo Capability: Do we need to increase our capability to attack the hardened Soviet ICBM force? This issue deals with weapons effectiveness and crisis stability. It relates directly to the future of the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] programs.
- Defensive Damage Limitation: What level of emphasis should be placed on U.S. civil defense programs, air defense, and ABM R&D?

The study points up the growth in the capability of Soviet general purpose forces and examines alternate U.S. responses. Among the key general purpose force issues raised in the report are:

- Adequacy of Forward Deployment: What are the appropriate levels of forward deployed forces in Europe and elsewhere?
- Assumptions on Warning Time: Should U.S. planning for initial NATO defense, mobilization, and short-term reinforcement continue to assume approximately three weeks of warning time?
- Sustainability: How long should U.S. NATO forces be capable of sustaining conflict, and what is the relative likelihood of a very short (days or weeks) versus a longer (months or years) war? Central to the sustainability factor are the issues of Soviet capabilities, U.S. equipment stocks, and mobilization and preparedness programs.
- Conflict Outside the NATO Central Region: How much combat capability should the U.S. maintain for conflict on the NATO flanks and outside the European theater? We currently maintain land, air, and naval forces for a range of possible contingencies outside Central Europe. Decisions on the future nature and size of these forces have major implications for the Navy and Marines, and are tied to special considerations such as Mid-East oil supply continuity and Korean defense.



Alternative approaches derived from different responses to these fundamental issues have been combined to form a number of illustrative notional strategies -- five for strategic forces and six for general purpose forces. These in turn are combined into a number of overall strategy alternatives. These combinations provide a useful framework for examining each issue in the context of overall defense policy. Two of the notional strategies approximate current policy, with alternatives ranging on either side of these base points. Tentative and extremely rough cost estimates have been provided for each strategy.

The study lends itself to a number of possible uses. Each of the Defense Review Panel principals has an independent view on the utility of the study and on the individual issues and alternative strategies presented in the report. There are differing opinions as to the extent to which the study in its present form provides an appropriate basis for decisions affecting our national strategies. As Secretary Rumsfeld points out in his transmittal memorandum to you, there is a need for additional analysis to reduce uncertainties associated with the strategy alternatives, the force requirements and the cost implications of each.

2. NSC Study on Naval Force Requirements. The NSC study on U.S. Strategy and Naval Force Requirements was initiated early in 1976 and conducted by the NSC Defense Review Panel. Its early development provided the basis for the May supplemental budget request to the Congress for additional shipbuilding funds. Your FY 1977 budget requested \$6.3B for 16 ships. The supplemental added \$1.2B for five more ships and long-lead funding for an additional carrier (CVN-71). Congress approved \$6.2B for 15 ships and the long-lead funds for the carrier.

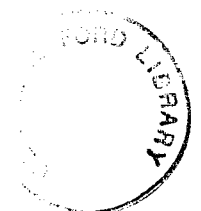
As a basis for U.S. force projections, the study has examined trends in the growth of the Soviet Navy, its capabilities for conducting naval warfare in areas more distant from the Soviet Union, and the increasing willingness of the Soviet leadership to employ naval forces in support of foreign policy objectives. The basic questions governing U.S. naval force requirements as set forth in the Navy study are:



- Should we accelerate current shipbuilding plans? The numerical size of the Soviet Navy has stabilized but newly constructed ships possess increased capabilities.
- Should the force mix of ship types stress expensive, highly capable ships, or should we concentrate on numbers, building less expensive ships of lower unit capability? Within this broad question, the study addresses such issues as carrier vulnerability and force levels; a program to modernize the existing carrier force; the nuclear/conventional power mix; the qualitative mix of other surface combatants; alternative methods of providing air power to the fleet; and the impact of future systems such as V/STOL aircraft and cruise missiles.
- Should the program stress new construction or should it emphasize the readiness of existing units while adding more slowly to the size and strength of the fleet?

Based on the projected threat and alternative responses to these basic questions, the study outlines major naval force alternatives. The current FY 78 Defense Plan builds an average of 22 ships per year for a force of 535 ships by 1990 at an average annual cost of \$6.9B in FY 1977 dollars. Three other major program options are offered:

- Option 1 would build no more large-deck carrier and would use the funds formerly devoted to carrier construction to build more surface combatants (an average of 28 ships per year for a force of 586 ships by 1990 at an average annual cost of \$6.9B in FY 1977 dollars).
- Option 2 would build one more large-deck carrier, develop V/STOL aircraft and deploy them aboard a few smaller aviation ships, and build additional surface combatants -- stressing numbers over unit capability (an average of 32 ships per year for a force of 608 ships by 1990 at an average annual cost of \$8.0B in FY 1977 dollars).



- Option 3 would build one more large-deck carrier, develop V/STOL aircraft and deploy them aboard more aviation ships, and build a mix of surface combatants -- stressing unit capability and numbers of ships (an average of 32 ships per year for a force of 609 ships by 1990 at an average annual cost of \$8.4 B in FY 1977 dollars).

Subsequent to the completion of the study, Defense added a Low-Mix Option. This option falls between Options 1 and 2 in overall Navy size and costs. It does not build one more large-deck carrier or any strike cruisers. It develops V/STOL aircraft and deploys them aboard one aviation ship, and includes additional surface combatants of lower unit capability and additional support ships. It emphasizes numbers of ships (an average of 32 ships per year for a force of 604 ships by 1990 at an average cost of \$7.5 B in FY 1977 dollars).

The study concludes that there is a need to improve our naval capability and that the current Defense Plan already includes an ambitious program to raise both the quality of our ships and overall force levels. The options presented provide a means to accelerate and expand the current plan. A choice among the options centers on the question of whether we should build one more large-deck carrier and the qualitative mix of surface combatants necessary to improve the fleet's anti-air and anti-missile capability.

- 3. Relationship between NSSM 246 Strategies and Navy Study Options. The NSSM 246 study outlines alternative defense strategies, and provides notional force structures, including naval forces, for each. The Navy study postulates three alternative force structures designed to implement current U.S. strategy. The options in the two studies therefore are not strictly comparable. However, some general correlation is possible, and a chart illustrating the general relationship is at Tab D.

- B. Participants: (List at Tab A)
- C. Press Arrangements: The meeting, but not the subject, will be announced. White House photographer only.



III. TALKING POINTS

(At the opening of the meeting)

1. The basic purpose of this meeting is to become acquainted with the results of two major NSC studies, both of which could provide important contributions to future U.S. defense policy and military posture. Don, would you brief us first on the response to NSSM 246?

(Following briefing and discussion of NSSM 246)

2. We also now have the final version of the Navy study which we discussed in a preliminary version last spring. Don, could we have the briefing on that study?

(Upon conclusion of discussion of the Navy study)

3. These studies clearly represent a major effort to grapple with the future direction of our military strategy and force posture. I want to consider them both in greater detail and will probably want further NSC discussion of NSSM 246.

Attachments

- Tab A - List of Participants
- Tab B - U.S. Defense Policy and Military Posture, Response to NSSM 246, November 30, 1976
- Tab C - NSC Study on U.S. Strategy and Naval Force Requirements, November 16, 1976
- Tab D - Implications of Navy Study Alternatives and Options for NSSM 246 Strategies



ATTENDANCE

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING

December 2, 1976

Cabinet Room - 9:00 a. m.

Principals

The Vice President

Acting Secretary of State Charles W. Robinson

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld

Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, General George S. Brown

The Director of Central Intelligence George Bush

The Director, Office of Management and Budget, James T. Lynn

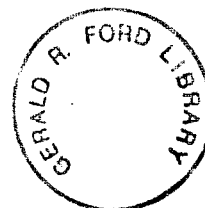
The Director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Dr. Fred C. Ikle

Other Attendees

Defense: Dr. James P. Wade
E. C. Aldridge

WH: Richard Cheney
Brent Scowcroft
William G. Hyland

NSC
Staff: General Richard Boverie



IMPLICATIONS OF NAVY STUDY ALTERNATIVES AND
OPTIONS FOR NSSM 246 STRATEGIES

Navy Study "Options" 1, 2, 3 and the Low-Mix Option,* each provide a specific force structure for the execution of current strategy. These "Options" are variants of Navy Study "Alternatives" B and C, and roughly describe an increasing force scale from NSSM 246 Strategy G-2 through G-3. Other NSSM 246 Strategies entail Navy forces lesser or greater than the three Navy Study "Options." These relationships are depicted in the following chart:

| <u>Navy "Alternative"</u> | <u>Navy "Option"</u> | <u>NSSM 246 Strategy</u> |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| A | Less than all "options" | Europe - 30 days (G-1) |
| B | Current plan Option 1 Low-Mix Option* Option 2 | Current strategy (G-2) |
| C | Option 3 | Current NATO/increased worldwide (G-3) |
| D | Exceeds all "options" | Increased NATO/increased worldwide (G-6) |
| E | Greatly exceeds all "options" | Exceeds all NSSM 246 strategies |

* Not addressed in the Navy Study; added by DOD after the study was completed.

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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

November 30, 1976

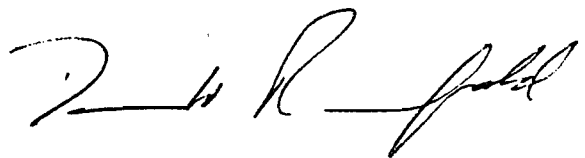
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL DEFENSE REVIEW PANEL

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Response to NSSM 246 - US Defense Policy and Military Posture (C)

Attached hereto is the National Security Council Defense Review Panel's response to NSSM 246. It addresses the current and projected threat, arms control, and resource considerations associated with our military posture. It also highlights a number of critical unresolved issues which impact on present and projected strategies and require further studies and analysis. Changing military and political considerations identified during the study make it questionable that our current policies and programs will be fully consistent with our national security requirements during the 1980s.

We have therefore developed a range of options in the form of notional alternative strategies for our strategic and general purpose forces, some of which merit further refinement and detailed analysis. Additional analysis is particularly needed to reduce the current uncertainty in the elements of each major strategy alternative, along with the force structure requirements and cost implications of each. These cost estimates are extremely rough and the figures are not agreed among your advisers.



Attachment
a/s

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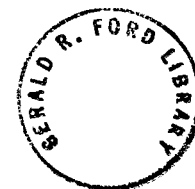
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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
STUDY ON
U.S. STRATEGY
AND
NAVAL FORCE REQUIREMENTS

16 November 1976

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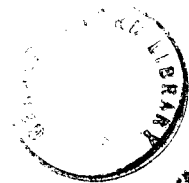
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